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Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 05694 031620Z
ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SP-02 INR-05 INRE-00
NSAE-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 NSCE-00 L-01 ACDA-10 SAA-01
SES-01 IO-06 SSO-00 /051 W
----------076564 031631Z /45
O 031530Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2908
SECDEF WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY SANA IMMEDIATE
DOD/ASD/ISA IMMEDIATE
CHUSMTM DHAHRAN IMMEDIATE
USMTM/DCR RIYADH IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T JIDDA 5694

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, SA, YE, UR, US
SUBJ: SAG POLICY ON YAR

1. AT DINNER ON AUGUST 1, DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS TOLD AMBASSADOR AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT MURRAY THAT SAUDI ARABIA CONSIDERED ITSELF THE BIG POWER IN ARABIAN PENINSULA. MR MURRAY AGREED THAT SAUDI ARABIA WAS PARAMOUNT POWER IN PENINSULA AND SAID THAT IT WAS IN THAT CONTEXT THAT WE PROPOSED THAT PROGRAM TO STRENGTHEN YAR DEFENSIVE CAPABILITIES BE A JOINT SAUDI-U.S. EFFORT. MR MURRAY WARNED, HOWEVER, THAT EVEN THOUGH WE BOTH RECOGNIZED THAT ROLE FOR SAUDI ARABIA, IT COULD PRESENT SOME PROBLEMS, HOPEFULLY MINOR, IN OUR YEMEN EFFORT. BOTH SAG AND YARG HAVE EXPRESSED DESIRE FOR VISIBLE U.S. PRESENCE IN YAR, BUT IF THAT PRESENCE IS TO HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANCE WE WILL HAVE TO BE ABLE TO TALK DIRECTLY
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TO YARG ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE MILITARY PROGRAM. PROGRAM CANNOT BE EFFECTIVE OTHERWISE. FOR THAT REASON, WE HAVE PROPOSED THAT PROGRAM BE TRILATERAL IN SENSE THAT WE ALL TALK DIRECTLY TO EACH OTHER. MANSURI SAW NO REAL PROBLEM IN ADJUSTING THE ARRANGEMENT TO TAKE CARE OF OUR CONCERNS.

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2. MR MURRAY ASKED IF SAG HAD ANY MISGIVINGS ABOUT BUILDING UP YAR MILITARY. MANSURI SAID HE WOULD BE VERY FRANK. SAG WANTED YAR TO BE SUFFICIENTLY STRONG TO BALANCE PDRY AND PRODUCE STABILITY IN SOUTHWESTERN PART OF PENINSULA. YAR SHOULD BE STRONG ENOUGH TO BE A THREAT TO PDRY BUT NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO BE A THREAT TO SAUDI ARABIA. MR MURRAY NOTED THAT THIS REQUIRED ACHIEVING A VERY DELICATE BALANCE. MANSURI RECOGNIZED THE PROBLEM BUT THOUGHT IT WORTH TRYING TO ACHIEVE.
WEST

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To: STATE DOD
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